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# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Margaret de Larios  
Southern California Association of Governments  
(213) 236-1842/ [delarios@scag.ca.gov](mailto:delarios@scag.ca.gov)



## ***SCAG appoints Kome Ajise as Planning Director and Julie Loats as Chief Information Officer***

**Los Angeles** – After two highly competitive national recruitments, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) welcomes new executive hires Kome Ajise as Planning Director and Julie Loats as Chief Information Officer.

Ajise will oversee the agency's newly formed Planning Division, which will more closely integrate the work of SCAG's previous Transportation Planning and Land Use and Environmental Planning divisions.

Ajise has almost 30 years of experience in regional planning and transportation, most recently as chief deputy director at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Previously, he was Caltrans' deputy director of planning and modal programs and was responsible for overseeing the Aeronautics, Mass Transportation, Rail, Transportation Planning, Local Assistance, and Research Innovation and System Information Divisions.

"Kome is a seasoned leader who understands the complexities of regional planning, and the challenges we face in Southern California and throughout the state as we prepare ourselves for the future. The planning work we do now will impact our economic viability, our daily commutes, our air quality and ultimately the health and well-being of our communities. Kome's experience and skills will be invaluable for us moving forward," said Hasan Ikhata, SCAG Executive Director.

Julie Loats, former Director of the University of Kansas Center for Online and Distance Learning, comes to the role of Chief Information Officer at SCAG with more than 20 years of experience in technology and administration. Her extensive background in web development and technical support will help SCAG expand its presence in the world of open data, providing cities throughout Southern California with access to information that can help them better prepare for future challenges.

"We're excited to have Julie join our team at this critical time for our region," said SCAG Chief Operating Officer Darin Chidsey. "Over the years, SCAG has accumulated an immense library of information that, properly accessed and analyzed, can and will directly impact the mobility, economic viability and quality of life for the 191 cities and six counties we serve."

Loats' accomplishments at KU include growing online courses and degree programs through organizational development, strategic planning and identifying technology platforms to increase the program's reach. Before joining the Center for Online and Distance Learning in 2011, she served as an online course developer and as Director for Enterprise Applications and Services, where she led diverse campus-wide teams to implement key initiatives that transformed student advisory services.

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***About SCAG***

SCAG is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and nearly 19 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG, please visit: [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).